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TITLE: HIV Intervention Models for Asian and Pacific Islander Women

AUTHORS: Joy Alunit (Asian Health Services, Oakland, CA)

ISSUES: API women are often overlooked in the area of HIV interventions and research. Therefore, not many issues are addressed or known about API women, especially those who are non-English speaking immigrant women with low literacy levels. It is difficult to do effective intervention work without identifying the issues facing many API women.

SETTING: Intervention strategies take place in individual, group and community outreach through workshops, gatherings and one on one counseling.

PROJECT: Asian Health Services AIDS Project Women's Program has developed intervention strategies for API women. (1) We have conducted consistent outreach to places where there are high concentrations of monolingual or limited English speaking immigrant women. (2) We have developed a comprehensive women's health package that is linguistically appropriate for our target population. (3) We have developed sessions for women called "Ladies & Lunch" and "Divas & Dinner" that informally educates participants on overall health issues and concerns for women including HIV/AIDS. (4) We consistently advocate for the needs of API women through community forums, CPG meetings and community organizations to address the needs of API women. (5) We informally offer a prevention case management component to our program.

RESULTS: The Program has been very successful in outreaching to many API women. We have penetrated massage parlors where a majority of API women work and sometimes live. We have consistent ties with women who work in nail salons and sewing factories within the county. Through our intervention strategies, we have provided resources and referrals for women and have conducted prevention case management. It is difficult to measure success in terms of behavior change but we have been told that our very presence have made a majority of women aware of their personal risk behaviors.

LESSONS LEARNED: Through the progression of our program we have learned that in dealing with these women, cultural sensitivity and competency is a key factor in outreaching to this population. The overall cultural heritage and conditioning of women in these ethnic groups must be a guide to do effective intervention work. It is also important to take a comprehensive approach on women's health as a model for HIV prevention intervention work.

PRESENTER CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Joy Alunit c/o Asian Health Services

Address: 818 Webster Street
Oakland, CA 94607-4220

Telephone: (510) 986-6830 ext287

Fax: (510) 986-6890

E-mail: jalunit@ahschc.org